

*Pride and  
Prejudice*



# Lenses of Literary Analysis

# Biographical

The assumption behind this approach is that *all fiction is, in essence, autobiographical*. If the critic studies the life of the author thoroughly enough, then he/she will be able to discover the true meaning and intent of the work itself. Every literary character is considered to mirror a person known by the author and every event in the work is derived from the author's own experience.

# Jane Austen

- 1775 - 1817
- Seventh child of a country parson who was in the lower fringes of the English gentry
- Romantically attached to a clergyman who died before they could become engaged
- Never married
- *Pride and Prejudice* published anonymously in 1813

# Sociological or Historical

The connection between the arts and the times in which they are created is considered indivisible.

*Literature is directly shaped by the history of that particular society* through predominant themes and character types.

# 1775

American colonies revolt against Britain

# 1780s

French revolution against monarchy

# 1793

Revolutionary France declares war on Britain,  
Napoleonic Wars until 1815

Repressive British government limits what can be  
published without danger of being accused of sedition



# Marxist

Based on Karl Marx's economic and political theories, Marxist critics see the individual person as a product of society's value system, and therefore look at texts to expose *how characters are constructed by their class and economy*.

# 1811-1820

Regency Period in Britain, characterized by highly-stratified society, with the rich showing extravagant social display and the poor living in desperate poverty

# primogeniture

inheritance of father's estate by eldest son through system of strict settlement or 'entail' - one generation expected to hold the estate in trust for the future generations

# Feminist

Feminist critics emphasize the politics of *gender differences and male dominance* in analysis of literature. By examining how women authors have written, and how women characters have been written about, they can understand the roles women have typically been assigned in society, especially that of victim.

# Religious expectations of the era

Whether marriage establishes between the husband and the wife a perfect equality of rights, or conveys to the former a certain degree of superiority over the latter, is a point not left among Christians to be decided to speculative arguments. The intimation of the divine will, communicated to the first woman immediately after the fall, is corroborated by various injunctions delivered in the New Testament. “Let the wife see that she reverence her husband. - Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church; - therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so left the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” The command in the second of these passages is so explicit, and illustrated by a comparison so impressive, that it is needless to recite other texts of a similar import.

- Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex*, London 1797

# Legal Code of the Era

By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law, that is, the legal existence of the woman is suspended during marriage, or at least is incorporated into that of the husband, under whose protection and cover, she performs everything...A man cannot grant anything to his wife, or enter into covenant with her, for the grant would be to suppose her separate existence, and to contract with her would be to contract with himself.

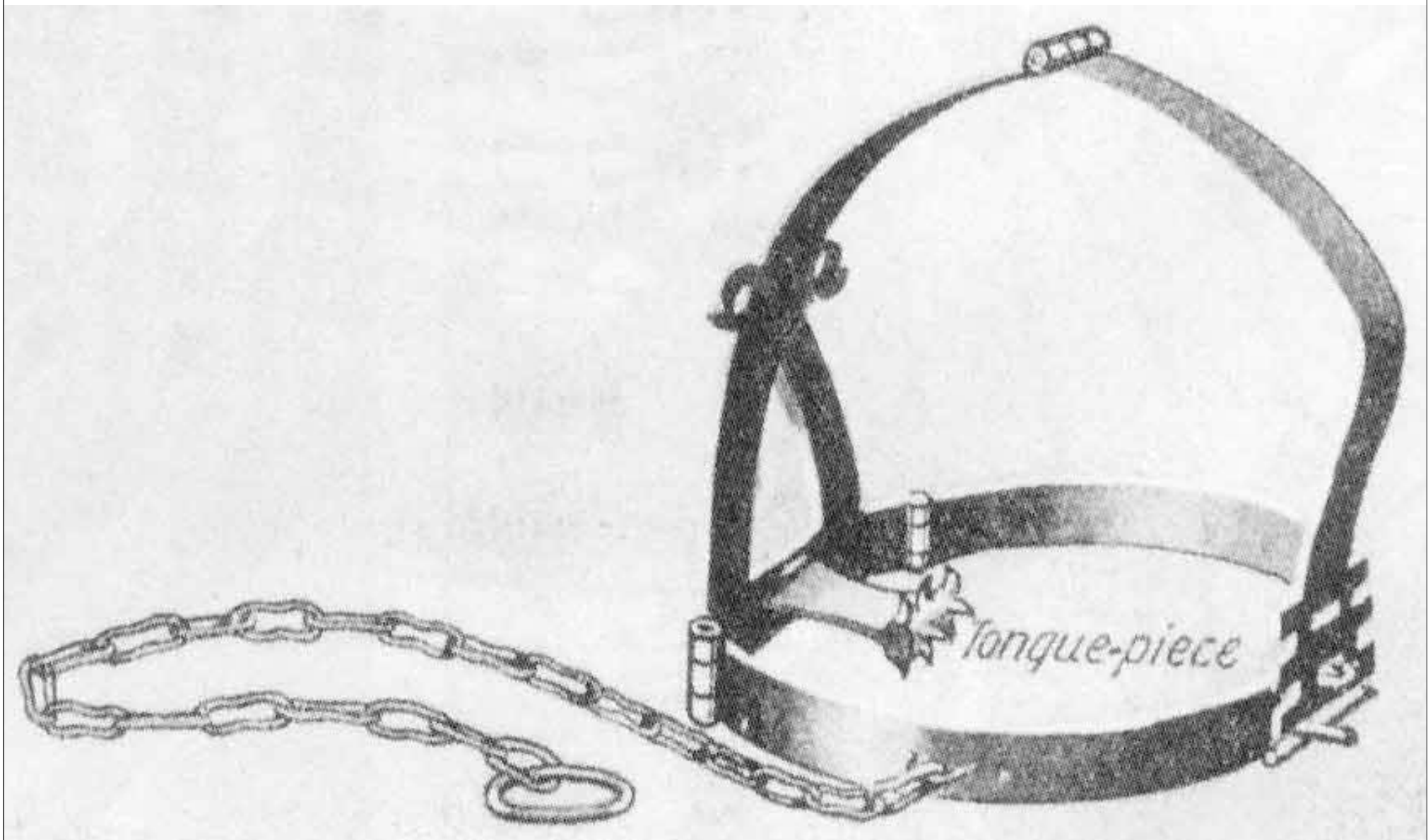
Under the old law, the husband might give his wife moderate correction. For as he is to answer for her misbehavior, the law entrusted him with the power of restraining her by domestic chastisement, as he would punish a child or an apprentice...The civil law gave a man even a larger authority over his wife, permitting him to whip her, if he deemed necessary. This form of correction was checked in the reign of Charles II, and has not been revived, but the courts of law still permit a husband to restrain his wife of her liberty, in case of any gross misbehavior.

- Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765)



A scold's bridle is a British invention, possibly originating in Scotland, used between the 16th and 19th Century. It was a device used to control, humiliate and punish gossiping, troublesome women by effectively gagging them. Scold comes from the 'common scold': a public nuisance, more often than not women, who habitually gossiped and quarrelled with their neighbours, while the name bridle describes a part that fitted into the mouth. It was commonly used by husbands on their nagging or swearing wives who agitated the male-dominated society of the era

Made by blacksmiths, the bridle was a cage-like device, made from iron. It was approximately nine inches high and seven inches wide, and was fitted to the woman's head. The most basic type was made of a band of iron, which was hinged at the side and had a protruding part, or tongue piece, that could be flat or with a spike, which went into the woman's mouth, to hold her tongue down.





# Scolds Bridle



## opening of *Pride and Prejudice*

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighborhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

# Pride and Prejudice Vocabulary I

**propriety** (noun) – conformity to the standards of politeness, respect, decency, or morality as expected by a society

**disapprobation** (noun) – the expression of moral or social disapproval

**foible** (noun) – minor flaw or shortcoming in character or behavior; weakness (often used in plural)

**veracity** (noun) – truth, accuracy, or precision

**conjecture** (noun) – formation of judgments or opinions on basis of inconclusive information

**duplicity** (noun) – the fact of being deceptive, dishonest, or misleading

**mien** (noun) – somebody's appearance or bearing, as an indication of mood or character

# Pride and Prejudice Vocabulary I

**supercilious** (adj) - behaving or looking at though one thinks one is superior to others

**eminent** (adj) – superior in position, fame, or achievement

**obsequious** (adj) - obedient or attentive to a superior to an excessive or servile degree

**verbose** (adj) – expressed in or using language that is overly complicated or long-winded

**fluctuate** (verb) – to change often from high to low levels unpredictably

**vivacious** (adj) - attractively lively and animated (esp a woman)

JENNIFER EHLE



Sometimes the last person on earth you want to be with  
is the one person you can't be without.







**Mrs. Bennet**  
**Langton, 1995**



**Mrs. Bennet**  
**Wright, 2005**





**Mr. Bennet**  
**Langton, 1995**



**Mr. Bennet Wright,**  
**2005**





# **Pride and Prejudice**

**BBC six-hour  
miniseries**

**Simon Langton,  
1995**



# **Pride and Prejudice**

**Joe Wright, 2005**







**Jane Bennet**  
**Langton, 1995**



**Jane Bennet**  
**Wright, 2005**



**Elizabeth Bennet**  
**Langton, 1995**



**Elizabeth Bennet**  
**Wright, 2005**



**Mr. Bingley**  
**Langton, 1995**



**Mr. Bingley**  
**Wright, 2005**







**Mr. Darcy  
Langton, 1995**



**Mr. Darcy  
Wright, 2005**



choice of actor

costumes

script

setting

lighting

music

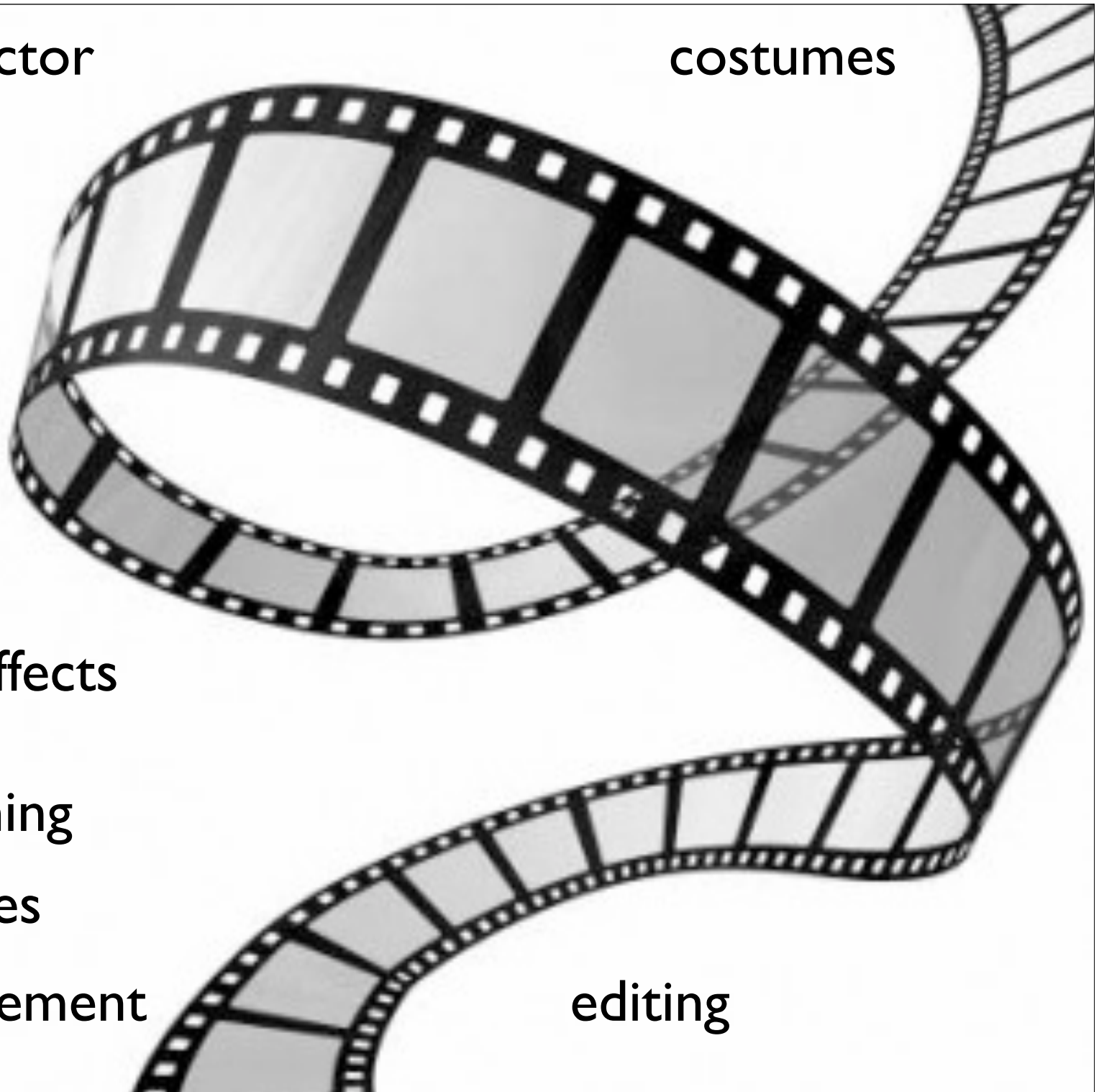
sound effects

camera framing

camera angles

camera movement

editing





*Pride and Prejudice* BBC six-hour miniseries  
director Simon Langton, 1995

# Humor

# Satire

To ridicule or mock ideas, persons, events or doctrines, or to make fun of human foibles or weaknesses, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and issues.

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Horatian  
(playful, light-hearted humor  
directed toward follies)  
Roman poet Horace

Juvenalian  
(contemptuous, abrasive  
satire addressing social evil  
through savage ridicule)  
Roman poet Juvenal



# AP Essay Question 3

## The Free-Response Essay

Thematic question that highlights a specific insight applicable to a broad range of literary texts.

Your response shows:

- you have read broadly and deeply of works of literary merit
- you demonstrate a mature understanding of the text beyond plot summary
- you can discuss a work in a particular context
- you can link how what you're discussing relates to the work's overall significance

# Pride and Prejudice Vocabulary 2

**impertinent** (adj) – showing a bold or rude lack of respect, esp. to a superior

**abhorrence** (noun) – feeling of loathing for or intense disapproval of a thing

**folly** (noun) – thoughtless, reckless behavior

**reproof** (noun) – the act of criticizing somebody for having done wrong

**chagrin** (noun) – distress of mind caused by humiliation, disappointment, or failure

**vexation** (noun) – the state of being provoked to irritability or anxiety

# Pride and Prejudice Vocabulary 2

**indolent** (adj) – wanting to avoid activity or exertion; lazy

**imprudent** (adj) – showing no care, forethought, or judgment

**reprehensible** (adj) – highly unacceptable and deserving of censure

**surmise** (verb) – to conclude that something is the case on the basis of limited evidence or intuitive feeling

**condescend** (verb) – to behave toward others as though they are less important or less intelligent than you are

**injunction** (noun) – command or order, esp. from a person in authority

**prevail** (verb) – to prove to be in the position of greater influence and power

# Approximate geographic locations of Austen's main locations

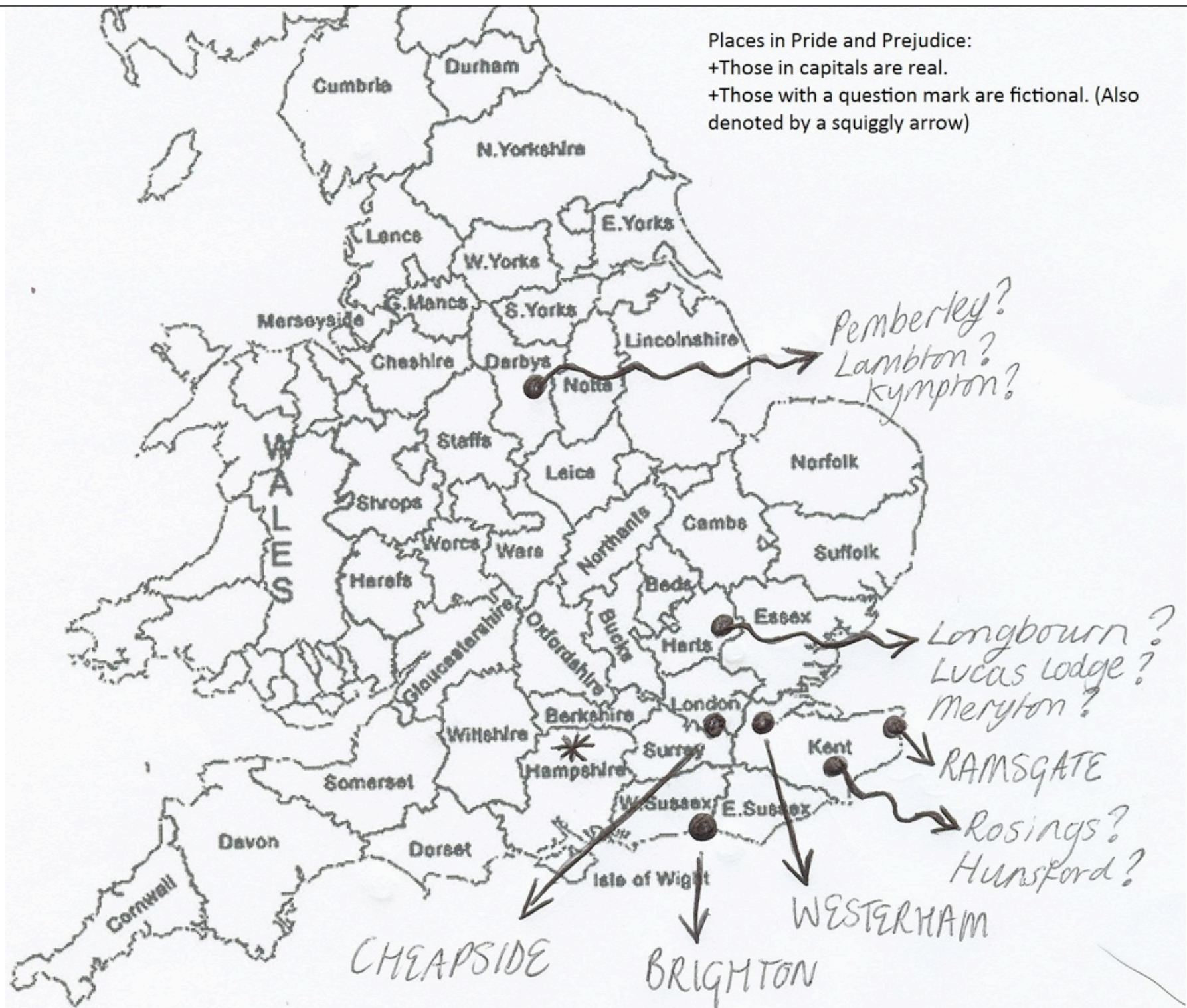




Places in Pride and Prejudice:

+Those in capitals are real.

+Those with a question mark are fictional. (Also denoted by a squiggly arrow)



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# AP Essay Question 3

## The Free-Response Essay

In many works of literature, letters form a critical pathway for communication of information and characterization distinct from other plot devices. Choose a novel or play in which correspondence by letter is critical. Then write an essay in which you show how the device of letter writing contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

**1991.** Many plays and novels use contrasting places (for example, two countries, two cities or towns, two houses, or the land and the sea) to represent opposed forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. Choose a novel or play that contrasts two such places. Write an essay explaining how the places differ, what each place represents, and how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work.



# Poussin - *Abduction of the Sabine Women* (1633-34)





# Turner - *Flint Castle* (1838)



# Neoclassic literature

seventeenth, early eighteenth centuries

# *Romantic Literature*

late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries

Neoclassic literature

1600s to early 1700s

Traditional

Society

Urban

Intellect/reason

Aristocratic

Rules

*Romantic Literature*

1789-1832

Experimental

Individual

Rural

Imagination/emotion

Common

Spontaneity

John Dryden (1631-1700)

Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

Jane Austen (1775-1817)

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Charlotte Bronte (1816-1855)

# Critical Response

"I am at a loss to understand why people hold Miss Austen's novels at so high a rate, which seems to me vulgar in tone, sterile in artistic invention, imprisoned in their wretched conventions of English society, without genius, wit or knowledge of the world. Never was life so pinched and so narrow. ... All that interests in any character [is this]: has he (or she) the money to marry with? Suicide is more respectable."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Why do you like Miss Austen so very much? I am puzzled on that point ... I had not seen *Pride and Prejudice* till I read that sentence of yours, and then I got the book. And what did I find? An accurate daguerretyped portrait of a commonplace face; a carefully fenced, highly cultivated garden, with neat borders and delicate flowers; but no glance of a bright, vivid physiognomy, no open country, no fresh air, no blue hill, no bonny beck. I should hardly like to live with her ladies and gentlemen, in their elegant but confined houses."

Letter from Charlotte Bronte to G.H. Lewes written in 1848

[A]nything like warmth or enthusiasm, anything energetic, poignant, heartfelt, is utterly out of place in commending these works: all such demonstrations the authoress would have met with a well-bred sneer, would have calmly scorned as outré or extravagant. She does her business of delineating the surface of the lives of genteel English people curiously well... [But] She no more, with her mind's eye, beholds the heart of her race than each man, with bodily vision, sees the heart in his heaving breast. Jane Austen was a complete and most sensible lady, but a very incomplete and rather insensible (not senseless) woman."

Letter from Charlotte Bronte

## **"Why art thou silent! Is thy love a plant"**

By [William Wordsworth](#)

Why art thou silent! Is thy love a plant  
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air  
Of absence withers what was once so fair?  
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?  
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—  
Bound to thy service with unceasing care,  
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant  
For nought but what thy happiness could spare.  
Speak— though this soft warm heart, once free to hold  
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,  
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold  
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow  
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—  
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know.



## Love's Philosophy

By [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#)

The fountains mingle with the river  
And the rivers with the ocean,  
The winds of heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion;  
Nothing in the world is single;  
All things by a law divine  
In one spirit meet and mingle.  
Why not I with thine?—

See the mountains kiss high heaven  
And the waves clasp one another;  
No sister-flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother;  
And the sunlight clasps the earth  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:  
What is all this sweet work worth  
If thou kiss not me?